PATENT CLAIMS

1. An airbag construction for protecting vehicle occupants in a motor-driven vehicle, having an airbag which is concealed in the normal operating state of the vehicle and is stowed folded up in an airbag housing and is connected to a gas pressure source which, when a crash situation is perceived by the crash sensor, uses the high pressure to suddenly puff out and inflate the airbag, the airbag thrusting in a targeted manner through the collapsing interior paneling 2, wherein the airbag actuates a flap 8 which is connected by a connecting element 13 to the interior paneling 2 which, by means of the opening via the tensile force which the connecting element exerts on the point(s) of weakness, produces a defined tear which destroys the interior paneling 2, in order to provide the passage space for the airbag, and pulls the region of the interior paneling 2 which contains the airbag covering 15 partially away from the vehicle interior or completely behind the interior paneling onto the side of the flap 8 which faces away from the airbag channel, so that the airbag can be unfolded unhindered and no parts of the airbag covering 15 can pass into the firing region of the airbag.

2. The airbag triggering mechanism as claimed in claim 1, wherein a structural space 7 is in each case arranged laterally and receives the blasted away airbag covering 15.

3. The airbag triggering mechanism, comprising an internal paneling which comprises a covering layer, which serves as a boundary to the passenger compartment and can be formed, for example, as a film or plastic support, and/or comprising a support layer having an optional foam layer situated between the covering layer and support, and a connection between the support layer and triggering mechanism, wherein the airbag triggers the flap mechanism which tears open the airbag covering 15 at the weakness.

4. The airbag triggering mechanism as claimed in claim 3, wherein the flap mechanism comprises a flap 8 and a connecting element 13.

5. The airbag triggering mechanism as claimed in claim 4, wherein the connecting element 13 is made from elastic material.

6. The airbag triggering mechanism as claimed in claim 5, wherein the connecting element 13 contains a fabric structure.

7. The airbag triggering mechanism as claimed in claim 4, wherein the connecting element 13 is designed as a stiff lever.

8. The airbag triggering mechanism as claimed in claim 4, wherein the flap 8 retains the airbag in its folded up position.

9. The airbag triggering mechanism as claimed in claim 4, wherein the connecting element 13 is also rotated about a hinge point fixed on the module.

10. The airbag triggering mechanism as claimed in claim 4, wherein the width of the flap 8 from the rotary joint 10 as far as the center of the flap corresponds approximately to the distance of the rotary joint 10 from the vehicle interior paneling 2.